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Diversity makes us stronger

By Dale Wainwright, TBCJ Chairman

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice is committed to equal employment opportunity and a zero tolerance policy against all forms of employment discrimination. In addition, the Department has a diversity policy which is predicated on more than compliance with state or federal law. The TDCJ recognizes that diversity within the workplace is a valuable asset because it enhances the Department's ability to accomplish its mission and enriches employees both professionally and personally.

While the Department's policy predates my appointment to the Board of Criminal Justice, its founding principle, that diversity is integral to the success of the Department as well as the growth of the individual, is very much aligned with my own views on the subject. Often we talk about diversity as a goal to be attained, when it is actually a way to accomplish the goals which organizations and individuals wish to achieve. And by remaining open, we can ensure that we continue to

hire and promote the most qualified employees and leaders for the Department.

The Board reflects the diversity of the Department. From our front line staff to senior agency administration, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice has a diversified workforce which includes thousands of minority and female employees, many of whom serve in leadership positions. There is diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background and more. This diversity allows our organization to benefit from the wide range of experiences and different perspectives that employees bring to the workplace, and improves the Department's ability to deal with the multitude of challenges we encounter.

Our workforce diversity also benefits individual employees who learn and grow from gaining new insight and a different perspective from interacting with their co-workers. Individuals who have experience dealing with diverse ideas and opinions are better

prepared to meet the challenges they encounter in the workplace and in other facets of life.

I want to thank Executive Director Bryan Collier, his senior staff and every other TDCJ employee who strives to make an already challenging work environment more positive for everyone. I also want to, once again, express my appreciation to every TDCJ employee for your public service. We all differ from one another in a number of ways, but the common denominator which binds us together is our dedication and commitment to public service. You all perform important duties, often in difficult, stressful and sometimes dangerous situations. Working together, you enable the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to fulfill our vital mission: to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society and assist victims of crime. Without your contributions Texans would be less safe. Thank you and God bless you. ●